

TO: CSB and BHA Executive Directors and SA/MH Clinical Managers

FROM: James S. Reinhard, M.D.

RE: Assistance with On-line Workforce Survey

DATE: November 1, 2007

I am writing to ask that you forward this email to all clinical staff providing mental health and/or substance abuse services and ask that they complete a survey to assess the status of the Commonwealth's public behavioral healthcare workforce. **The survey is available online, and can be found at the Virginia Service Integration Program (VASIP) website.** I feel that this is a unique opportunity and hope that you will encourage all of your staff to take part and **complete the survey by November 30th.**

Pilot tests have indicated that it should not take more than 10 to 15 minutes to complete. Please encourage all MH/SA clinical staff to visit the VASIP website at [www.dmhmrsas.virginia.gov/vasip](http://www.dmhmrsas.virginia.gov/vasip). Once there, they can click on the "Click here to take the Workforce Survey" link, and they will receive more information on how to complete the survey.

As many of you know, in 2004 the Department of Mental Health, Mental Retardation and Substance Abuse Services was awarded a five-year, \$3.5 million Co-Occurring State Infrastructure Grant (COSIG) from the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to enhance the screening, assessment and treatment of co-occurring mental illness and substance use disorders. This grant led to the creation of the VASIP, a program that is working to enhance our service system's infrastructure to support integration of services for persons with or at risk of co-occurring mental health and substance use disorders.

One of the important initiatives of VASIP is workforce development. To that end, VASIP has developed this workforce survey. The survey is designed to assess the ability of our workforce to address the complex needs of individuals with co-occurring disorders and to determine what training and educational needs exist to better prepare the workforce to address the needs of this growing population. With the assistance of staff from CSBs and BHAs, state facilities, the Department, and the VACSB's Data Management Committee, VASIP has created an instrument that will do an outstanding job of capturing information on these needs. This is an exciting initiative because it allows our workforce the opportunity to voice their own opinions about their current and future training needs.

After the survey is completed and the results are analyzed, we will be providing a report that summarizes the needs that have been identified. Additionally, we will be making the feedback from your board available to you for any internal review that you might like to perform. Furthermore, the VASIP Professional Training and System Development Workgroup will use data from the survey to develop a plan that we hope will address any gaps in knowledge identified by the survey.

I want to thank you and your staff in advance for taking part in this important initiative. I believe that the information gained will help make our workforce stronger, better trained, and more able to meet the needs of all Virginians.